

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 HA-05 TRSE-00 IO-13 SY-05 MCT-01 /101 W  
-----089513 130205Z /73

P R 120916Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8295  
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 4524

EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINS, IR  
SUBJ: MAY 11 RELIGIOUS PROTEST SMALLER THAN EXPECTED AND  
CONTROLLED BY SECUTIY FORCES

SUMMARY: SUMMARY: LARGEST PROTEST DEMONSTRATION BY RELIGIOUS  
MILITANTS IN THE COUNTRY MAY 11 TOOK PLACE IN TEHRAN AT BAZAAR  
MOSQUE. IT WAS MORE LIMITED IN NUMBERS THAN EXPECTED (UNDER  
TWO THOUSAND) AND WAS DISPERSED IN FAIRLY SHORT ORDER BY SOME  
TWO THOUSAND SECURITY POLICE AND TROOPS WITH APPARENTLY FEW,  
IF ANY, CASUALTIES. A HEAVY SECURITY PRESENCE IN OTHER PARTS  
OF THE COUNTRY APPEARS TO HAVE PREVENTED LARGE DEMONSTRATIONS  
BUT SITUATION REMAINS TENSE AS OF MAY 12 ESPECIALLY IN GHOM. END  
SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF EMBASSY SOURCES, INCLUDING GOOD  
JOURNALISTIC SOURCE WHO HAD POLICE AS WELL AS EYE-WITNESS  
ACCOUNTS, GOVERNEMENT MASSED SOME TWO THOUSAND POLICE  
AND ARMY AT THREE POINTS AROUND BAZAAR AREA WHICH CON-  
TAINS MOSQUE AT WHICH RELIGIOUS PEOPLE ARRIVED, PRESENCE OF  
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SECURITY FORCES FAIRLY INTIMIDATING. NEVERTHELESS, NUMBER  
OF SPEAKERS IN MOSQUE DELIVERED FIERY VERSIONS OF  
AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI'S ATTACKS ON GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING  
ATTACKS ON MONARCHY AND THE SHAH. AT ONE POINT  
PARTICULARLY FIERY SPEAKER REPORTEDLY SAID SHAH SHOULD  
TURN OVER GOVERNEMENT TO RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IF HE CANNOT  
RUN THE COUNTRY, AND THEY WILL RUN IT ACCORDING TO GOOD

ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES. CROWD APPLAUDED AND ROSE AS IF TO TAKE TO THE STREETS BUT SPEAKER CALMED THEM DOWN BEFORE MEETING BROKE UP AROUND ONE P.M.

2. AS CROWD LEFT BAZAAR, SECURITY TROOPS FORCED IT TO BREAK UP INTO TWO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. THEY WENT ONLY A SHORT WAY SHOUTING ANTI-SHAH SLOGANS, AND BEFORE GETTING TO PTT OR INANCE MINISTRY, ENCOUNTERED SOLID PHALANX OF TROOPS WHICH BROADCAST WARNINGS TO DISPERSE BY LOUDSPEAKER. AFTER A FEW TEAR GAS GRENADES WERE THROWN AND SOME SHOTS FIRED INTO THE AIR CROWD DISPERSED. POLICE AND TROOPS DID NOT RPT NOT CHASE THEM DOW SIDE ALLEYS AS HAS BEEN CASE IN DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE PAST. THEREFORE, POLICE ASSERT FEW, IF ANY, CASUALTIES RESULTED AND BBC REPORTS OF DEAD ARE FALSE. OTHER JOURNALIST SOURCE TELLS US NORMAL OPPOSITION INFORMANTS UNABLE CONFIRM ANY CASUALTIES.)

3. RELIABLE JOURNALIST TELLS US HE WAS PRESENT NEAR HIGH RANKING POLICE OFFER ABOUT 10:30 A.M. WHEN INSTRUCTIONS CAME "FROM THE HIGHEST SOURCE" THAT POLICE WERE TO ISSUE WARNINGS, THROW TEAR GAS, AND FIRE INTO THE AIR IF NECESSARY, BUT AVOID SHOOTING AT DEMONSTRATORS. IF USE OF BATONS BECAME NECESSARY, THEY WERE TO BE EMPLOYED BELOW THE WAIST. OFFICER TRANSMITTED THESE INSTRUCTIONS, ADDING THAT IF TROOPS WERE UNDER PERSONAL DANGER AND CONFIDENTIAL

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FELT THEY HAD TO DEFEND THEMSELVES THEY SHOULD DO WHAT IS NECESSARY WITHOUT ASKING PERMISSION TO SHOOT. SOURCE ASSERTS SHAH WAS PERSONALLY IN OPERATIONS ROOM OF NIAVARAN PALACE DURING MORNING AND AFTERNOON AND PERSONALLY ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS AS EVENTS WENT ALONG.

4. SIMILARLY HEAVE SECURTIY DISPOSITIONS WERE REPORTEDLY IN PLACE IN MANY OTHER MAJOR CITIES. POLICE SAY DEMONSTRATORS HAD INTENDED TO ATTACK SOME SHOPS WHICH WERE OPEN. BY 2:30 P.M. DEMONSTRATORS EFFECTIVELY DISPERSED FROM BAZAAR AREA. QUIET MORNING MAY 12 EYE WITNESSES DIFFER AS TO THE EXTENT OF SECURITY PRESENCE, WITH NORMAL ACTIVITY BY SIDEWALK PEDDLERS AS USUAL ONF FRIDAY.

5. FULL GARRISON OF APPROXIMATELY 1,000 TROOPS TOOK POSITIONS IN GHOM WITH CHIEFTAIN TANKS STATIONED AT STRATEGIC CROSSROADS AND NEAR MOSQUE AND SQUADS OF ARMED SOLDIERS SITTING ON THEM. NO LARGE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 4524

DOMONSTRATIONS TOOK PLACE IN GHOM BUT SITUATION REMAINS  
TENSE TODAY.

6. CONSULATES TABRIZ, ISFAHAN AND SHIRAZ CONFIRM HEAVY  
PRESENCE OF SECURITY TROOPS MAY 11 WITH TENSION  
BUT NO MAJOR ACTIVITY. CONSULATE ISFAHAN HAS NOT  
CONFIRMED REPORTS OF SOME RIOTING IN SOUTH  
PART OF CITY NEAR UNIVERSITY AND IN THE NORTH, AND BUILDING  
SET AFIRE ON PRINCIPAL AVENUE OF ISFAHAN. CONSULATE  
SHIRAZ STATES SOME DISORDER OCCURED IN  
PAHLAVI UNIVERSITY 1900 MAY 11 BUT INCIDENT WAS OVER TWO  
HOURS LATER WHEN POLICE AND FIRE TRUCKS CALLED IN.  
UNIVERSITY OF AZARBADEGAN IN TABRIZ AND PAHLAVI  
IN SHIRAZ, WERE CLOSED. SHIRAZ REPORTS LESS VISIBLE  
SECURITY MAY 12.

7. BRITISH EMASSY HAS PICKED UP REPORTS THAT MORE  
STUDENTS THAN THE THREE REPORTED IN PRESS WERE KILLED IN TABRIZ  
MONDAY, MAY 8. JOURNALISTIC SOURCE HAS IT FROM POLICE  
AND PRESS SOURCES THAT AS MANY AS EIGHT  
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PEOPLE MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED IN GHOM RIOTING MAY 9  
AND 10. NO POLICE KILLED. ABOUT ONE DOZEN

INJURED ALL TOGETHER. THEORY MAKING THE ROUNDS IS THAT DEMONSTRATORS SCHEDULED TABRIZ ON MONDAY, GHOM TUESDAY NIGHT AND WEDNESDAY, AND TEHRAN THURSDAY, SO THAT THEY COULD CONCENTRATE NUMBER OF TRAVELLING AGITATORS FROM CITY TO CITY. WHILE THIS HAS SOME LOGIC TO IT, NO ONE HAS PRODUCED PROOF.

8. COMMENT: LIMITED SIZE OF DEMONSTRATION IN TEHRAN, PLUS COMPARATIVELY EFFECTIVE WAY IN WHICH MASSIVE GOVERNEMENT SECURITY PRESENCE LIMITED EFFECT OF DEMONSTRATORS IN TEHRAN SUGGEST GOVERNEMENT IS CAPABLE OF PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER WITHOUT EXCESSIVE INJURIES AND BLOODSHED. REPORT THAT SHAH PERSONALLY DIRECTED SECURITY FORCES RINGS TRUE TO US. WITH SITUATION IN GHOM AND ELSEWHERE STILL TENSE, IT SEEMS VERY LIKELY SHAH RELUCTANT TO LEAVE ON EAST EUROPEAN TOUR UNTIL THINGS SETTLE DOWN. WE SUSPECT THERE IS MORE THAN HIS LINGERING COLD TO EXPLAIN HIS POSTPONEMENT OF DEPARTURE FROM MAY 12 TO MAY 16 (TEHRAN 4522 NOTAL). HE WILL PROBABLY WANT TO ASSURE RELATIVE QUIET BEFORE HE DEPARTS. WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE FURTHER CRACKDOWN, INCLUDING SOME ARRESTS OF OPPOSITION LEADERS. SULLIVAN

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
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